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Western Student Publications

2-1984

Monthly Planet, 1984, February

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Recommended Citation

Toteff, Sally and Huxley College of the Environment, Western Washington University, "Monthly Planet, 1984, February" (1984). *The Planet*. 120.

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Monthly Planet

A Publication of the Associated Students Environmental Center Western Washington University

Volume 5 Number 2

February 1981



Inside: Alger Lawsuit Follows Bureaucratic Sidestep
Those with Dough Eat the Bread
Green Party Sprouts in BC
Glow On Columbia Glow On
Ruckelshaus Gives New Life to EPA

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Special Thanks To: Patty Combs, Vicki Critchlow, Ernst Gayden, Bobby Jones, Bert Webber and Brian Blix
In our last issue, we failed to recognize Laurie Jervis and Karen McCrackin as our consulting editors. To Laurie and Karen we extend an apology and a belated "special thanks."

cover design by Nancy Ryan



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To Our Readers

The *Monthly Planet* is a publication that strives to inform, entertain and stimulate thought on environmental issues. We, the *MP* staff, know that environmental interest and concern is not confined to just the experts and the radicals. By broadening the focus of the *Planet* we hope to appeal to a community-wide audience. Let us know what you like or would like to see in the *Planet*; reader participation is invited in all aspects of its publication.

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Ecobriefs

Glow on Columbia Glow On

Radioactive politics at Hanford

It appears that politics, not geology, will determine the site of our nation's first high-level radioactive waste repository. The Nuclear Waste Policy Act (NWPA) was signed into law in January 1983. It was designed to guide the selection of the safest possible permanent waste repository, but Hanford seems destined to become the first site in spite of its questionable safety characteristics. In addition to Hanford, possible sites are being evaluated in Louisiana, Mississippi, Nevada, Texas and Utah. In January 1985, three of these sites will be recommended for further study to culminate in the selection of the first site in March of 1987. A similar pattern will be followed to select the second site in 1990.

The Hanford Atomic Reservation lies on the Columbia River in eastern Washington. Politically, Hanford is an attractive site for a waste repository. The Hanford Reservation is federally owned and little citizen opposition has been noted in contrast to other sites under consideration.

Furthermore, the local population views the repository as a boost to the local economy. Richland residents derive 90 percent of their income from the \$700 million the government spends on Hanford each year. According to the Tri-

City Herald, the high-level waste repository could ultimately mean an additional \$20 million for the local economy.

The Department of Energy (DOE) claims that Hanford is an adequate geologic site for rad-waste disposal. However, the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) described the geology of the Hanford site as "leaky." Furthermore, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) and the USGS estimate that it would take hundreds of years -instead of the 13,000 years estimated by the DOE- for nuclear wastes to reach the Columbia River.

Even after the final recommendation is made to Congress, construction cannot begin immediately. Affected state and Indian tribes are guaranteed the opportunity to review the Environmental Impact Statement and voice objections. If a state or Indian tribe does object, both Houses of Congress can vote to override the objection.

The Yakima Indian tribe already opposes the Hanford site, but the state's legislature and governor do not. If enough public pressure is put on our representatives, state government may be forced to object. By monitoring the site evaluation proceedings we can best ensure that Hanford is judged on its geologic, not political merits.

Roy Fore



Please Recycle

Bellingham Buys Stanford Vision?

Institute suggests changes in local economy

In the midst of Whatcom county's high unemployment, concerned citizens formed an Economic Development Strategy Committee to explore and support local job-creating activities. The committee discovered that the current economic base has already matured and thus does not hold much promise for future employment opportunities. To assist in devising an economic development marketing strategy, the committee hired Stanford Research Institute, International (SRI), a firm based in Palo Alto, California. The project was conducted between April and September 1983.

The SRI report states that Whatcom county needs to shift from an industrial- toward a service-based economy. The report stresses that the county must become less dependent on major employers such as Intalco and Georgia Pacific. The county's economic base relies so much on these employers that if there were major employment reductions in these companies, the whole

county would suffer.

The report suggests that Whatcom county promote the growth of local business, while emphasizing recreation and tourism. It names several industries the county should pursue. Targeted industries include medical and testing laboratories, machine shops, warehouses, some light manufacturing and outdoor clothing and equipment.

To achieve better cooperation between different economic sectors within the county, the report suggests that an economic development marketing plan should become a continuing process. Mayor Tim Douglas has already taken steps to unite the efforts of different county groups and agencies by combining the Department of Planning with the Department of Development.

Good schools and services, a clean and scenic environment, and a productive, reliable labor force are all selling points that should be used to lure companies into the area, the report concludes. ■

Doug Price

Opinion Split on Gorge Land Use

On one side are environmentalists, on the other local residents

Separate bills regarding the future of the Columbia Gorge have been introduced into Congress. Supporters of preservation predict that both the Senate and the House will pass some form of legislation next year.

One bill would set up a bi-state commission accountable to the U.S. Forest Service to manage land use in the Gorge. It would designate the Gorge as a National Scenic Area. The rival measure, endorsed by most of Oregon's and Washington's congressional delegation would also set up a land-use commission, but it would consist mostly of gorge residents and would not be accountable to either state

or federal authorities.


Some gorge residents argue that the first bill would deny them their right to self-government.

Bowen Blair, head of the group, "Friends of Columbia Gorge" warns of developer's plans to build homes on choice scenic sites of the Gorge. One fight over housing ended in October when the San Francisco-based Trust for Public Land stepped in and bought 60 acres of land earmarked for development at a price of \$350,000.

Blair, however, stated, "Until we see an overall management plan for the Gorge, it's just going to be nibbled away." ■

Laurie Stephan

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Fill-In Plans Leave Out Public

Christine Banko

Jackson International Airport it's not, but Bowerman Basin in Grays Harbor serves as a critical stopover for thousands of migrating shorebirds. Each spring and fall, plovers, dunlin, dowitchers, western sandpipers and 20 other bird species re-fuel in the basin on their way from South America to Alaska's Copper River Delta. Grays Harbor is the last and largest roosting and feeding ground along the Pacific coast for the birds' final 1000 mile flight to Alaska. Counts of the shorebirds taken during the peak of migration range from 500 thousand to a million. Peregrine falcon, an endangered species, can also be found at the basin preying on shorebirds. Maintaining these bountiful numbers however, depends on the Grays Harbor Estuary Management Plan (GHEMP).

Grays Harbor is a large estuary about 60 miles west of Olympia, near Hoquiam and Aberdeen, Washington. The fresh and salt waters mixing in the shallow basin of an estuary provide a rich environment for a diverse community. Estuaries are also ideal for human development because of their flat

landscape and proximity to river and sea. Businesses in Grays Harbor include an airport, sewage lagoon, several lumber companies and ports. As a result of industry, 4000 acres of Grays Harbor has been filled and developed since the 1940s. Its mudflats are half as extensive as they once were. The reduced acreage has increased the density of the shorebird populations.

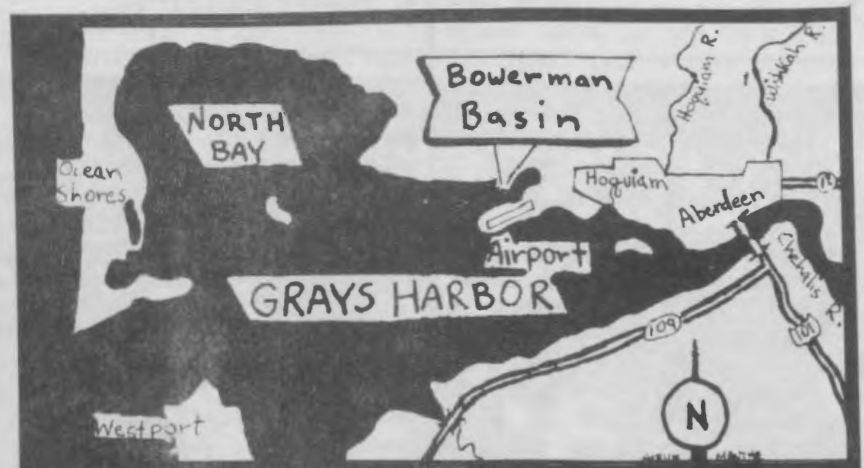
Bowerman Basin is only two percent of the estuary's tidelands, but because it is the first of the mudflats to be uncovered by the tide, nearly half of the birds roost and feed there. Further industry will nibble away at even

more of the eastern flats, decreasing the birds' roosting grounds.

The purpose of GHEMP is to provide guidelines for these areas considered for future development. Such guidelines would avoid long and heated battles about land use between the Port of Grays Harbor, state and federal agencies. A task force to write a management plan was created in 1976 involving a total of 16 government agencies and local municipalities. The project was funded by the Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management (OCRM) under the Department of Commerce. A part of this OCRM plan was to include public input. Since its first draft, GHEMP has undergone two revisions.

The original management plan was rejected by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service because it violated the Federal Clean Water Act. The second draft was again rejected by Fish and Wildlife because the proposed 500 acre fill would further endanger the peregrine falcon. GHEMP's third revision was published in 1981. This time the Fish and Wildlife Service was quiet while other biologists and environmentalists squawked. In its latest version, GHEMP calls for relocating an existing airport that would cover some of the most productive shorebird grounds.

In August 1983, the draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for GHEMP was issued by OCRM. This draft EIS, however, was not in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) rules which state that an EIS include alternative plans for land management. OCRM noted that, "... public input into the process takes place before the planning begins...and



after the compromises are reached." The GHEMP task force did not include a citizen advisory committee nor solicit public opinion. What the draft actually contained, said Friends of the Earth (FOE), was a previously agreed upon proposal by the task force and was not a fair representation of the range of reasonable alternatives. FOE is questioning whether an EIS should be prepared before or after a pro-

The GHEMP task force did not include a citizen advisory committee nor solicit public opinion.

posed alternative is selected.

This contradiction led to a coalition of environmental and conservation organizations creating the Citizens Alternative Estuary Management Plan. Because of NEPA, this alternative appears in the draft EIS. It reveals the main weakness of GHEMP's latest proposal. Namely, that areas that are not destined for filling lack any "real" protection. Further, the coalition's interpretation of the Clean Water Act would not allow filling or dredging in those areas. FOE notes that existing fills are not yet developed - they question whether more fills are necessary.

Currently, the EIS remains in draft form. Because GHEMP is the first model of coastal zone management planning in America, national economic and environmental leaders are watching closely for its outcome. A public hearing held last September drew almost an even number of those in favor of GHEMP and those who want the alternative. Over 400 letters commenting on the draft EIS have been received and will be reviewed by the task force agencies.

No matter which plan is adopted, Grays Harbor will not be left entirely open to industry. Yet shorebird populations will decline because of reduced acreage and more of the shoreline will be altered. But as Dr. Steve Herman, a zoologist at The Evergreen State College noted, "Who would notice?...We're talking about nibbling away at a species. This is an area of international significance, and we should treat it that way." ■

Recyclers Adjust to GP Closure

Rob Van Orsow

Georgia Pacific Corporation will shut down its paperboard recycling mill this month. The closure of the plant, which recycles 50 tons of paper daily, will have far-reaching consequences for the Bellingham community, as GP operates the only paper recycling plant in the area.

According to GP spokesperson Orman Darby, GP "is pruning to keep the most effective and high performance areas of the corporation."

Local recyclers, such as the Associated Student's Recycling Center (ASRC), have enjoyed cost savings because of GP's close proximity, but will now face potentially costlier recycling methods. According to City of Bellingham recycling coordinator, Phillip Morely, the closure may mean a shift in the market.

The shut down will result in the permanent layoff of approximately 50 hourly workers at GP. Although employees pooled their assets in an attempt to collectively purchase the paper plant, GP rejected the offer.

ASRC will be affected in at least three ways by the closure of the paper mill. Unlike GP, other local paper brokers do not accept mixed paper in various grades. This means an increase in labor costs for ASRC as more time is spent sorting paper into its various grades. Transportation costs will also increase as ASRC will be required to ship their paper farther. Because GP purchased ASRC's paper unbaled in large boxes, ASRC has been spared the high cost of buying, installing and operating a paper baler.

ASRC is considering doing business with three companies to replace the service GP has supplied. Northwest Recycling, another local paper collector, is willing to buy the bulk of ASRC's newsprint and cardboard. This company has a paper baler that can easily handle the 40 tons of paper per month that ASRC currently collects. But, Northwest Recycling does not accept

high grade paper such as computer paper and ledgers. ARSC can sell these higher grades to either Puget Sound Recycling or Weyerhaeuser's Kent, Washington recycling mill.

According to ASRC's operations manager, Jeff Brown, the key to successful paper marketing in the future lies in having access to at least two brokers who will compete for the collected paper by keeping their buying prices high. The most logical path to take, Brown noted, is to avoid the costs associated with a paper baler as well as to minimize transportation costs.

City recycling coordinator Morely said the closure of GP's recycling plant indicates "more of a need for a comprehensive recycling program...it means the city must play a stronger role." Western's new University Recycle Policy is an example of a comprehensive plan that will serve to increase the amount of recycling by the University.

GP's shutdown may be just the shock needed to stimulate a city-wide recycling program in Bellingham. ■

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"Roundup" in Alger Turns into Shootout with DNR



Anne Lorgen

Quiet, out-of-the-way Alger seemed like an ideal community to Sally and Jim, with its peaceful woods and green fields. They bought a few acres of woodland and together built their home near a creek that rushed through the trees. Over the years they enjoyed their land and used the sweet, pure creek water in their home.

Jim and Sally began to think Alger's clean and healthy environment would be perfect for children, so they decided to begin a family. In time, Sally became pregnant.

Soon after, word came from a neighbor that a herbicide was to be sprayed on a clearcut close by. Sally and Jim worried that the herbicide would contaminate their drinking water. They were concerned about the possible health effects of the spraying, particularly because of Sally's pregnancy, but also because of their community's dependence upon shallow wells and streams. Rural Alger's clean, healthful environment suddenly seemed fragile and threatened.

Sally and Jim are not real. They are a composite sketch of several Alger residents, and accurately portray the feelings and

concerns generated by the situation the community faces.

When the citizens of Alger discovered last August that the state Department of Natural Resources (DNR) was planning an aerial spraying of the herbicide Roundup on clearcuts in their watershed, they requested a meeting with the agency.

DNR representatives listened to residents explain their concern that Roundup could become dissolved in runoff and contaminate their water supplies. The officials also realized that their maps of the area were probably inaccurate when they heard the residents describe how creeks flowed through the watershed.

The citizens told DNR that they were unwilling to bear the health risks which could result from the spraying of the herbicide. Roundup, they said, is known to cause liver damage. They also noted that the independent testing of the product (see related story this page) is suspected to have been falsified. Roundup has been banned in Canada, they pointed out, because of inadequate testing. They concluded that the herbicide was too great a risk to their community because of its questionable safety.

In response to the resident's concerns, DNR representatives offered them a no-spray agreement, to last one year, while the two groups worked out a mutually acceptable plan. A letter, dated September 9, from DNR's Northwest area manager Harold Villager made this agreement official. It stated that the DNR "will forego any treatment of this unit for one year."

Three weeks later, residents found DNR supervising the ground application of a herbicide on the same clearcut. The chemical being used was not Roundup, however, but Garlon. Federal law prohibits the use of Garlon in areas where runoff or contamination of drinking water is likely to occur.

Although notification is part of DNR's policy, no one in the community had been informed about the spraying, which had been going on for about three weeks. DNR officials contend that the agreement applied only to aerial spraying. According to Brian Boyle, State Commissioner of Public Lands, "in the letter, phrases such as 'as discussed with your group' and 'treatment', were used to limit the restriction to the aerial application."

In reaction to what they perceive as unresponsiveness by the DNR, the residents formed the Alger

Watershed Association. Together with the Mount Baker Watershed Protection Association, they filed suit against DNR to halt further spraying.

The suit claims that DNR applied the herbicide in undiluted form, without proper application equipment and in an area where runoff and drinking water contamination were likely to occur. Thus, the agency violated the State Environmental Policy Act, the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act, and the civil rights of the residents of Alger.

Although the watershed groups are filing suit against DNR, an out-of-court settlement is preferred. DNR and the two groups are meeting presently to discuss the issue and work toward resolving the problem. Both sides have indicated a willingness to explore alternative methods in the management of the watershed area. ■

What Is "Roundup"?

Mason Hewitt

"Roundup is safe, if used in accordance with the label instructions," said a spokesman from the Monsanto Company, makers of Roundup. "We have spent \$20 million on validating its safety."

Monsanto holds a patent on the active ingredient, glyphosate, in Roundup. Since its introduction in 1976, the commercial mixture of 0.50% glyphosate and 99.5% surfactant has been used on millions of acres of crop and forest lands in the United States. Farmers and timber companies like Roundup since it kills both roots and above-ground vegetation. This occurs because glyphosate is quickly absorbed and translocated to all parts of a plant.

Data on glyphosate from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) indicates the herbicide does not bioaccumulate in the environment and presents minimum toxicity to terrestrial and aquatic life. However, in 1979 it was reported to EPA that glyphosate readily combines with nitrogen to form a

suspected carcinogen, N-nitrosoglyphosphate. Instead of testing the herbicide for carcinogenicity, EPA accepted Monsanto's assurance that this compound would not show up in human food crops.

Later in 1980, four officers of a chemical company, previously hired by EPA to test Roundup, were indicted for knowingly submitting false test data to EPA. An audit of the company revealed that they had falsified 12 glyphosate tests, including one for carcinogenicity.

More doubts surfaced about Roundup's safety in 1981. The California Department of Fish and Game found fish kills in areas sprayed with Roundup. They questioned whether something other than Roundup's active ingredient was a toxin. As a result, EPA commissioned an independent report on Roundup that was compiled by the TRW Corporation. This report indicated the toxic agent in Roundup is the inert ingredient (the surfactant). The report said the surfactant is toxic to aquatic life at doseages as small as 1.4 milligrams per liter.

When environmental groups requested additional data on the surfactant from EPA they were informed that the inert ingredient of Roundup is registered as trade-secret information and not available for public release. Under current pesticide legislation, chemical manufacturers may request EPA not to release proprietary information to the public to protect their market position.

In August 1983, several Northwest environmental groups commissioned a report on Roundup by Seattle-based genetic toxicologist, Dr. Ruth Shearer. She found that glyphosate appears to interfere with phosphorus oxidation in the liver, leading to lesions and death in test rats. In addition, a mutenicity test was positive. "This study," said Shearer, "is suggestive of the ability of glyphosate or some 'inert ingredient' in Roundup to damage genes."

In spite of increasing evidence against Roundup's safety, the Washington Department of Natural Resources recently sprayed the herbicide on several hundred acres of state-owned timberlands in Whatcom and Skagit counties. ■

Ruckelshaus Gives New Life to EPA

But Has "Reaganmortus" Set In?

Roy Fore

When William Ruckelshaus was unanimously confirmed by the Senate last spring as the top administrator of the EPA, both the public and private sectors hailed his selection as the logical choice.

Ruckelshaus had been the first EPA administrator and had overseen the implementation of many of the major environmental laws, such as the Clean Air Act. In addition, he had a record of being an honest and highly capable administrator. When Ruckelshaus returned to EPA the agency was under fire and in turmoil. After less than a year in office however, the reviews Reagan's Mr Fix-it has received have been mixed.

Upon taking command Ruckelshaus worked quickly and successfully to restore confidence in the agency. The rhetoric surrounding the EPA has cooled and has been taken off the front page. By meeting with congressmen, congressional committees, business leaders and environmental groups, and by making his weekly appointment calendar public, Ruckelshaus has fostered a feeling of cooperation and openness. Furthermore, the morale of EPA employees is improving.

The EPA has moved ahead with toxic waste clean-ups under Superfund. The record of completed clean-up actions is still dismal, only six to date, but clean-up actions are up and progress reports are being issued biweekly. Regional managers have been given greater authority to assess situations and initiate actions to achieve this improvement. Other steps contributing to the change are a policy of pursuing the responsible parties to recover costs, and elimination of the requirement that affected states pay 10 percent of the clean-up costs. Combining these steps has reduced the delays characterizing earlier actions.

The new administrator has also vowed to end the delays in imposing controls on more than two dozen industrial air pollutants.

In the midst of the positive changes there are criticisms of the EPA under Ruckelshaus. Enforcement of regulations has continued to be slow, and no proposal to control acid rain has been made in spite of public statements by both Reagan and Ruckelshaus that such controls are needed. Ruckelshaus is also under criticism for his stand in favor of easing clean air standards and his personal crusade for risk

Ruckelshaus has thus far played the role of the good soldier.

assessment and management.

Last year, regional offices sent in 35 percent fewer cases to Washington for prosecution than in 1982. A policy initiated by Ann Gorsuch which would have punished states for failing to comply with clean air standards was discarded by Ruckelshaus. The policy called for withholding highway funds from states not in compliance with the regulations.

Ruckelshaus' stance in favor of easing the standards of the Clean Air Act has drawn sharp criticism from environmentalists. Under his proposal the EPA would be allowed to use discretion in controlling certain air pollutants. Controls would be based on anticipated public health benefits. To this end he has urged easing controls to balance risks and costs.

In a letter to George Bush after the 1980 election, Ruckelshaus apologized for the damage done to business by environmental regulations in the past decade, saying that he was interested in seeing constructive change in our country's social regulatory policy.

Of primary concern to environmentalists has been Ruckelshaus' failure to propose controls which would reduce acid rain. Cabinet opposition from both the Department of Energy (DOE) and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), forced him to abandon a proposal with en-

vironmentalists had already labeled as being too weak. The Clean Air Coalition had charged him with trying to ease controls on sulfur dioxide emissions. Furthermore, the proposal was aimed only at easing lake pollution in the Northeast by imposing restrictions on sources in the Midwest. Both the OMB and the DOE assailed the plan as too costly.

A primary goal of Ruckelshaus is to firmly establish and improve risk assessment and management. This involves a sort of cost-benefit analysis where risks are weighed against the benefits of controls to ensure that marginal gains are not made from excessive costs. Laws are to reflect scientific realities and policy considerations cannot be allowed to alter risk assessment. Environmental groups are expressing concern over this preference for analyzing problems strictly in scientific terms and possibilities.

In conjunction with this goal Ruckelshaus is seeking to move the EPA from an advocator role to the role of an educator. The proceedings in Tacoma are an illustration of this. Ruckelshaus hopes that by informing the public about the risks posed by the Asarco smelter, and the costs of imposing controls on it, the public will accept a balance between the two. To this end he has solicited public comment.

Opposition to EPA is growing in the White House. For example, the recently released study on the greenhouse effect was renounced as being too alarmist by the White House. In addition, the OMB has called the EPA's approach to managing toxic waste risks too conservative, saying that some risks should be regarded as reasonable.

Ruckelshaus has thus far played the role of the good soldier. Until he is free of political constraints there will be little progress, unless sufficient pressure can be brought to bear on the White House, in carrying out EPA's assigned tasks. With less than one year in office, Ruckelshaus deserves praise for bringing normalcy back to the agency. However, because little or no progress has been made to control pollutants, especially those contributing to acid rain, the new administrator's first months must also be labeled disappointing. ■

Green Party Sprouts in BC

Douglas Dobyns

As our society becomes more technologically complex, and our economy less understandable, governments are becoming increasingly involved in all areas and at all levels of society. It follows then, in order to protect what we have left, and to effect the necessary transformations (to a conserver society), some segments of the environmental movement are going to have to become politically active." —Jim Bohlen and Mark Craft, 1981.

Claiming to be "Neither Left nor Right, but Ahead" in their initial pamphlet, from which the above quote was taken, the Green Party was established almost a year ago in British Columbia. May 5th, when the provincial election was held, saw more than 3,000 votes cast for Green candidates.

The main significance in the election was that serious attention was given to an alternative. Into the polarized political arena of B.C., the Green party has tried to gain a position by asking whether the rules to the game are at fault. People are rejecting the two major political camps in Canada —the Liberals and the Conservatives—because they are tired of voting either at the tax office or at the bank. Greens are asking whether computers need to rule our lives or whether people are willing to make collective decisions by taking responsibility at the scale where these decisions are most effective.

What the Green Party is proposing is a step toward a decentralized forum-type of policy that allows each region to create their own political platform(s).

The process the Green Party is trying to foster depends on the small group and on the willingness of the individual to take the initiative. With the kind of prob-



lems which our society is facing, this may be the only way to a real solution. Obviously the Greens are questioning more than simply the political status quo and the leaders who are plugged into it. Moreover, for Canadians to legally raise questions that popular political parties may ignore, it is important to have the Green as a registered federal party. An amendment to the Canada Elections Act, passed last Oct. 25, makes it an offence for anyone except reg-

istered parties and their candidates to buy political advertising or print posters, bumper stickers and the like during an election campaign.

The Green Party is taking a new stand. It has four predominant policies to work from. One policy objective is to establish nuclear and general disarmament and work toward peace. The words establish and work are significant because they require an active stance toward the threat of war in our nuclear age. If anything will spark success for the Greens, it will be getting people to shake off their paralysis of fear.

Two similar objectives are to create an ecologically sound economy and to build a conserver society. These two policies will require creativity because they do not surrender very well to the time frame by which politics is usually played. The conserver concept runs counter to North American societies which set high value on conspicuous consumption and the material forms of status. Perhaps the idea of some Native Americans has a place —that one must keep 15 generations (seven generations forward and seven behind) in mind when making a decision that will impact on the lifestyle of the whole.

The fourth policy is to institute respect for fundamental human rights. This has to be given first to oneself before it can be given to others. If the Greens have it and can share it, they will grow. If they don't, this is just another blat in the flatulence we call politics. ■

JOB ANNOUNCEMENT:

The Environmental Resource Library is seeking applicants for the position of coordinator. Must be qualified for work-study and have some knowledge of environmental issues. Library or administrative experience preferred but not required. To apply contact Diane Merrill in the Huxley office (ES 534) or come on up to the library in room 518 of the ES building.



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Speak Out

Those with Dough Eat the Bread

As population pressures increase and world hunger intensifies, it is time Americans consider their role in this international crisis. The solution to world hunger, maintain some vegetarians, is to cut out meat and dairy products from our diet. They claim that the grain and cereals currently fed to livestock could be directly used for human consumption. But would starving countries have more food if Americans consumed less meat?

No.

In his book "Merchants of Grain," Dan Morgan argues that dietary habits are not the issue, money is. Those who have money are able to eat, those who don't go hungry. This is true even in the United States where two billion pounds of surplus food sit in government storage while soup kitchens across the nation try to serve thousands of hungry Americans. Moreover, U.S. farmers today are paid to let their lands lie fallow, in order to maintain the ceiling price of grain.

Another widely supported solution to the crisis calls for grain producing countries to send food subsidies to hungry nations. However, when these subsidies are given to a needy nation, the food aid can concentrate in the hands of a powerful minority, leaving most of the hungry population with empty stomachs. For example, so much of the economic and food aid that Canada has given to Haiti has been pocketed by the Haitian government that Canada slashed Haiti's aid, calling that government a "kleptocracy."

The United States enacted Public Law 480 in 1958 to dispose of surplus grain. One method used to distribute this surplus has been to give food subsidies to nations that support U.S. policies. Of course, if a country needing aid has a political system which the U.S. government doesn't support, then food subsidies may be cut off, as it was to the Sandinista government of Nicaragua in 1981, and to

the Allende government of Chile in 1971. In the case of Chile, Allende's inability to provide food for his people partially resulted in the eventual overthrow of his government.



Although the United States is a major food exporter, it is also the world's largest food importer, with meat, sugar, coffee and cocoa as the main imports. The land used by developing countries to grow these crops for export to the United States could be used by each of these nations for growing their own food.

Haiti is a country with some of the world's bleakest statistics on human welfare. 44 percent of the national income is earned by one percent of the Haitian people; land-barons control the best land for growing export crops. The United States supports the repressive government responsible for these conditions by sending aid and importing a great deal of Haitian sugar. If this land was made available for the poor majority to grow food for local consumption, their standard of living would be substantially better. Yet it is doubtful whether reduced imports of Haitian products by the United States and other industrial nations would actually alter the situation.

In view of so much world starvation, the ethics of wasteful consumption are questionable. However, world hunger cannot be blamed solely on the eating habits of a few; politics plays a much stronger role in who eats and who starves. The answer is not necessarily a change in our diets, but a change in political systems. ■

Kristin Swenddal

Big Brother or Social Renewal? Society on the Brink

Welcome to 1984.

Orwell's classic work, "1984", marks this year as a philosophical watershed. Are the industrial era values of material progress and technological growth defining a utopia or ushering in Orwell's Big Brother? Utopia or Big Brother - the result depends on our cooperative action as a society. New developments in the spheres of science, politics and business could easily combine to create an Orwellian future.

Orwell's book was published during a period when physics bore humanity with the paradox of nuclear energy. As we ring in the new year the scientific sphere is again presenting us a problem. Breakthroughs in genetics are leading us toward ever greater control over the human reproductive process. Genetic research is providing hope in the fight against many disabling diseases, but who is to say that genetic knowledge will be used properly? No effective means now exist to control the scientific advances of today. Genetics gives humanity the enormous power of playing God. The power of genetic technology in the wrong hands could easily be used to fashion a brave new world.

The new year also presents us with unparalleled crises developing in the world of politics. Ronald Reagan has successfully concentrated power into fewer hands, and

may continue to do so over the next four years. Reagan's policies of censorship and secrecy have made it harder for the average citizen to acquire information about the government. A more subtle and deeper problem is the lack of any significant policy alternatives other than Reagan's. Our bureaucracies are suffering from overload which results in their stagnation. Thus, our governing system has become a political monolith incapable of responding creatively to increasing social instability. Without a fundamental shift of focus, this political monolith could unwittingly become an operative big brother.



The closest thing resembling big brother is in the business world. Multinational corporations often transcend national sovereignty thus making it difficult for governments to control their own operations. The multinationals' dominion over resources, distribution networks,

capital and advertising gives them vast amounts of power. Yet these institutions show little social justice when they exploit developing countries for the benefit of industrial nations. The zero-sum manner of multinational corporate operations has concentrated wealth and power. As a result, the income gap between rich and poor nations has widened in recent years. Multinationals have the power to create an Orwellian future and may indeed work toward this if they stand to maximize their profits along the way.

The developments in science, politics and business, and the ethics guiding them, hold tremendous consequences for all. Orwell's underlying message is that we cannot trust people who are in love with power. This message is similar to what Duane Elgin says in "Voluntary Simplicity". Elgin's philosophy is based on the voluntary and conscious will of the individual to change and be creative. He offers a model of a lifestyle whereby we could promote ecological harmony and social justice. Elgin's book is a refreshing response to Orwell's prophecy. These two authors describe humanity's unique position. We can build a new civilization, or we can help forge the chains that eventually enslave us. ■

Dave McFadden

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Books

Science Controls Us in "Brave New World"

Brave New World, Aldous Huxley.

(New York: Modern Library, 1946).

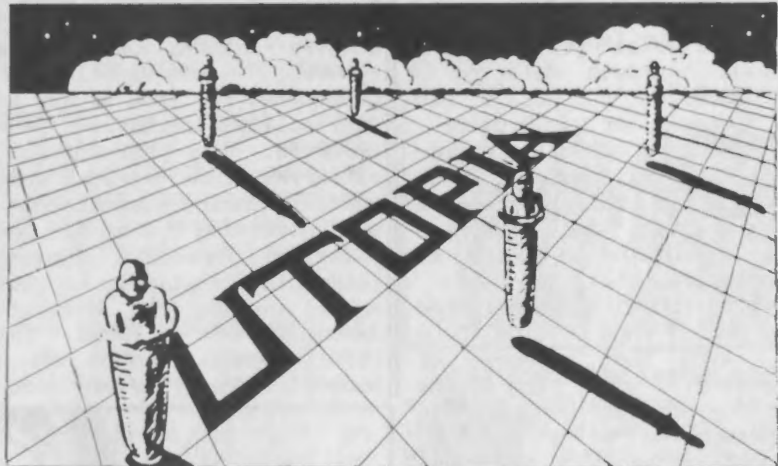
310 pages.

With the advent of 1984, "Big Brother" is hovering in everyone's mind. Specters of Orwell's Thought Police and brainwashing sessions haunt the new year. Contemplation of such a totalitarian state raises questions as to which direction present worldwide governments are headed. The concept of a "Big Brother" controlling our world is a theme also addressed in Aldous Huxley's "Brave New World."

Huxley portrays a society where clones are mass produced to fit into a predetermined social hierarchy consisting of Alphas, Betas, Gammas, Deltas and Epsilons. All are subliminally conditioned as infants to fulfill a purpose set by the World Controllers. "Having someone" (i.e., copulation) is common entertainment in this hedonistic society. A variety of erotic pleasures such as sex-hormone gum, hot contraceptives, scent organs, stereoscopic feelies, and soma—a drug that allows a pleasant and often ethereal holiday from reality—are all part of this brave new world.

Hedonism is the motivating factor and incentives such as daily soma rations are used to reinforce desirable behavior. Through this drug-induced submission a society of docile servants is created. As a result, social stability prevails.

Huxley's introduction of the main character, John Savage, casts shadows of doubt on this utopian society. Savage is from a place literally fenced off from the brave new world, called the Savage Reservation, where absurdities such as marriage, illness and childbirth are realities. People of the brave new world consider the reservation extremely backward and view the fenced-in people as



wild animals. Indeed, their science and technology is far behind that of the brave new world, perhaps exemplified by a lack of contraceptives and the resulting unheard of and appalling biological fact of women giving birth. People of the brave new world have altogether lost sight of the beauty of child birth. Test tube babies and clones are seen as a step forward for humanity.

Unaccustomed to the lifestyle in the brave new world and the dominant role science plays, Savage becomes skeptical of such a subservient existence. During his youth on the reservation, Savage read Shakespeare and other classical works. From these books Savage learned about human dignity, freedom, liberty, beauty, compassion and truth. Yet, this Eden, this brave new world, lacked the vitality of life which Shakespeare and the others knew and wrote about so well.

Instead, Savage sees humans painlessly regimented into a society of human automatons. Freedom is non-existent and individual mobility in the social hierarchy is virtually impossible.

Yet, the absence of mobility and freedom is never questioned, let alone understood, because of soma-induced complacency. Savage continually muses over the words of Miranda: "O brave new world that has such people in it."

It is science, as portrayed by Huxley, that ensures the continuation and stability of the brave new world. Science is no longer a tool of humanity but rather the sovereign power controlling human thought and activity. Those who revolt, such as Savage, against this tyrant must answer the fateful and proverbial question that Shakespeare's Hamlet asked: "To be, or not to be: that is the question."

"Brave New World" offers a shocking portrayal of the far-reaching implications of science and technology for society. However far science and technology take humankind, Huxley presents an imaginative prophecy warning of the pitfalls of using them as cure-alls to the world's problems. "Brave New World" is perhaps Huxley's most readable work and should not be missed even if it is the year to spotlight George Orwell's provocative "1984".

Mark Gunlogson